

stop to the more or less extensive outbreaks of diphtheria which in spite of all precautions had occurred from time to time. This together with the substantial results reported from Auburn, N. Y., and New Haven, Conn., were sufficient to impress upon health authorities a new responsibility and a crystallizing opinion is emphasizing nowadays more and more the protection of children before 18 months of age and at the latest, prior to the time of school attendance.

The leading pediatricians of the larger cities of the Pacific Coast are rapidly immunizing children within their sphere of influence. It remains to be seen how rapidly others in the profession will follow their example.

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### Dermatology and Syphilology

**SCHAMBERG** and his coworkers using various gold compounds, particularly gold and sodium thiosulphate, have been able to demonstrate a decidedly curative effect, and a prolongation of life, in cases of experimental inoculation tuberculosis in animals.<sup>1</sup> More recently<sup>2</sup> they have obtained truly excellent results in the treatment of lupus erythematosus by means of intravenous injections of gold and sodium thiosulphate. This dermatosis, most cases of which Schamberg regards as tuberculous, is notoriously resistant to treatment. Therefore a remedy with positive value is very welcome.

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### Gastrointestinal Disorders

**ACHYLIA**—The recent appearance of an article entitled "The Clinical Significance of Achylia Gastrica"<sup>3</sup> again stimulates thought regarding a subject frequently lost sight of owing to the fact that examination of the gastric contents is rarely routine for patients with gastrointestinal complaint coming before the average physician.

The first premise in discussing achylia is to definitely decide what constitutes this condition. The conclusion universally adopted is the absolute lack of any hydrochloric acid in the gastric contents at all times. Along with this absence must also be the corresponding lack of ferments. To disclose the absence of acid and ferments in the secretion a definite routine must be followed. Even today many physicians continue to use the old single test of extracting the gastric contents at one hour after the test meal with the large Ewald tube. The absence of hydrochloric acid in this test has caused many diagnoses of achylia when better tests later showed the presence of an abundance of acid. The fractional method of studying the gastric content as developed by Rehfuß<sup>4</sup> always should be used to the exclusion of the single test. Only by a study of

the stomach content every fifteen minutes from the fasting period through two hours of the digestive period will the true condition be revealed. If no hydrochloric acid is found up to the first hour it may appear during the second hour. Thus a "psychic" secretion due to apprehension in facing the test is replaced by the "chemical" secretion in the second hour.

With findings warranting the diagnosis of achylia gastrica the problem is to determine the cause and its significance. Friedenwald and Morrison find two types of achylia: (1) primary where the total acid is very low, and (2) secondary where the total acid is much higher. In the first type several members of the same family may have achylia and the condition may be found in the first two decades. The second type follows various depleting conditions such as acute fevers, malignant tumors, and anemias. The authors have rarely found a return to normal secretion when true achylia has been demonstrated. Such findings appeared in neurasthenics.

The fact that true achylia has been found in patients who develop pernicious anemia opens a subject for discussion as to its bearing on the anemia state. Such a discussion introduces a large amount of evidence that needs individual consideration.

There are three classes of patients in whom these authors find achylia. Those of the first group have no gastrointestinal symptoms and are apparently in good health; those of the second have a greater or less number of gastric symptoms, while the third group have slight or no gastric symptoms but have marked intestinal disturbances.

The largest number of patients appear in the second group, in whom the condition appears more frequently between the ages of 30 and 60 years and is more common in females than males.

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### Ophthalmology

**INCIPIENT Cataract**—An effective method of checking the progress and removing the opacities in a beginning cataract has been long sought. Various remedies have been used, and good results reported. Green<sup>1</sup> reported 58 per cent and 25 per cent arrested by the use of mercury cyanid injections. Franklin and Cordes<sup>2</sup> reported 84.3 per cent improved by the use of radium. Harkness<sup>3</sup> reports sixteen patients treated with milk injections and was disappointed with the results. He sent out questionnaires to forty teachers of ophthalmology in Class A medical colleges; the great majority of these teachers do not think that any known remedy is of any service except the removal of foci of infection and improvement of the general physical conditions; a few believe that they have had good results from medical treatments including dionin, iodine therapy, locally and internally, with dietetic supervision, the removal of the foci of infec-

<sup>1</sup> Arch. Derm. and Syph., Vol. 14, No. 1, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Arch. Derm. and Syph., Vol. 15, No. 2, p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> Friedenwald and Morrison: Annals of Clinical Medicine, 1926, Vol. No. 4, p. 319.

<sup>4</sup> Rehfuß: J. American Medical Association, 1914, 63, p. 11.

<sup>1</sup> Green, A. S. and L. D.: American Journal of Ophthalmology, 1919, Vol. 2, p. 423.

<sup>2</sup> Franklin, W. S., and Cordes, F. C.: American Journal of Ophthalmology, 1920, Vol. 3, p. 643.

<sup>3</sup> Harkness: American Journal of Ophthalmology, 1925, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 132.